

EDINA PARK BOARD
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2006
7:00 P.M.
EDINA COMMUNITY ROOM
EDINA CITY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andy Finsness, Linda Presthus, Todd Fronek, Jeff Sorem, Mike Damman, George Klus, Mike Weiss, Karla Sitek, Ray O'Connell

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeff Johnson, Gordon Roland

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton

OTHERS PRESENT: John Henry, Jean White, Idelle Longman, Jeannie Hanson, Dianne Plunkett Latham, Helen Woelfel, Martha Rice, Jill Hartman, Lincoln Shea

I. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 10, 2006 PARK BOARD MINUTES

Andy Finsness MOVED TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 10, 2006 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Karla Sitek SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. UPDATES

- A. Gymnasium Construction – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the gyms are under construction and are moving right along. He noted that to date they have had some change orders totaling approximately \$90,000 but they are still in good shape. Mr. Keprios stated that even with the \$200,000 contingency that, if necessary, they have there is still approximately an additional \$200,000 as a fall back position in bonding funds plus they are earning interest on the bonds. Therefore, financially they are going to be fine.

Mr. Keprios indicated that the Joint Powers Oversight Committee would like to develop a couple of protection canopies to better define the entrance to the two gymnasiums so that people will know where to park. He noted that there will be a concession stand which will have an outside wall and will be located between the gym and lobby. He commented, however, that they still need to find funding for the concessions equipment. Mr. Keprios stated that they did a change order to go back to the base bid to ensure that they have the best quality floor.

- B. Edina Youth Sports Taskforce – Mr. Weiss noted that he has received a lot of feedback from the community regarding the Youth Sports Taskforce. He

indicated that he has talked to approximately 10 to 12 people who have watched it and have a commentary on it one way or another. Most of them did state that they think the Youth Sports Taskforce is a lot to do about nothing. Mr. Weiss stated that the latest update in terms of the Youth Sports Taskforce is they have finished their committee meetings and will draft a recommendation to bring before the Park Board next month. Mr. Klus stated that the recommendation will probably go before the Park Board at their April meeting. Mr. Klus noted that the only thing they are waiting for is to get back public testimony and depending on that they could possibly pass a draft onto the Park Board at next month's meeting.

Mr. Klus informed the Park Board that they are now down to trying to write the relationship agreement. He noted that there has been some criticism in that they don't want this to be a staff document that is just a rubber stamp by the committee. Mr. Klus stated that he will write the first draft before the Youth Sports Taskforce meets at their work session on Saturday, February 26th from 7:00 am to 9:00 am. He noted that Park Board members are welcome to listen or participate. He stated that they may open it up to public comment but that they are going to try to put it into some type of a written document before then.

Ms. Presthus asked if the purpose of the document is to recommend whether or not there should be a Youth Sports Oversight Committee or is it how should the Park Board relate to athletic associations. Mr. Klus replied that it could be either or both. He noted that they have identified those issues that they think are important to the inter-relationship. He noted that he doesn't think everything will end up in the document because that is still up for debate. He explained that after they've identified those issues from the athletic associations and taskforce committee they will then incorporate that into the document. He noted that at the last meeting it was just too difficult to try to incorporate everything. Therefore, he will write up a document so that there will be something for the committee to react to because otherwise it's just too hard for people to visualize how it will all fit together. Mr. Klus stated that once the document is complete he doesn't think it will be that much different than the current document which was written in 1977. It will just be written with more up-to-date terminology. Mr. Klus commented that at their meeting they looked at a document that was written in 1980 about youth sports in Minnesota and the issues are still pretty much the same with the exception of girl's sports which was a huge issue in 1980. He pointed out that he doesn't think from the 1970s to today there is a lot of difference in what's going on in youth athletics.

Mr. Weiss stated that he doesn't agree, he thinks it is a whole new world out there and would answer Ms. Presthus' question differently. He indicated that he thinks the mission of the Youth Sports Taskforce is best defined as determining the roles of the Athletic Associations, the Park Board and the Park and Recreation Department. He noted that is the mission statement, that's what they'll decide to do and as a part of that they will look at the relationship agreement and the facilities use agreement. Mr. Klus stated that the facility use agreement is not part

of their mission to which Mr. Weiss replied no, it's not. However, from the standpoint that if they are going to use these facilities then they will be affected by it. Mr. Klus indicated that there has been a lot of confusion and rightly so on the Facilities Use Agreement versus the Relationship Agreement and what the differences are. He noted that at the last Youth Sports Taskforce meeting it was tough to delineate the two differences and that's what they have to do. Mr. Weiss commented that what he thinks they are looking to do is say these are the Athletic Association duties, these are the Park Board duties and these are the Park Department duties. He noted they talked more about delineating who does what. Ms. Sitek added that an offshoot of that is whether or not there will need to be an oversight committee. Mr. Klus commented that he thinks that belongs in the relationship agreement, at least as a mandate, to what they feel needs to be done because that's part of the relationship between the Athletic Associations, Park Board and City.

- C. Todd Park Hockey Rink – Mr. Klus stated that as a Park Board they've received a lot of emails over the last couple of months. He noted that what distresses him is the City Council decided to do a two year review of this, however, that two year deal seems to come under quite a bit of scrutiny over the last month or so. He indicated that Mr. Keprios has spent a lot time listening to the neighbors concerns as well as trying to set up criteria of how they are going to monitor the rink at Todd Park. He noted that what concerns him the most is people need to realize that this is a two year process and not a two month process. Mr. Klus pointed out that the City Council could turn around and change their decision to which he personally would be disappointed because the Park Board has spent so much time on this issue.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the reason this is on the agenda is because a Park Board member requested it be put on the agenda. Mr. Keprios handed out a memo to the Park Board which reflects the results of a meeting he had with Vince Cockriel and Mayor Hovland at 6:00 am on Friday, February 3rd. He noted that they visited three different parks with a light meter reader because they have been receiving a lot of complaints that the light readings are too high at Todd Park. Mr. Keprios explained that they have reduced the total number of fixtures being used from eight to four, which is using only two on each pole. In addition, they've invested in both visors and hoods to create more of a spotlight effect to minimize the splash and glare. He noted that they've done everything they can do to minimize it to a point where the general rink is now actually dangerously dark. Mr. Keprios indicated that they took a meter reader reading at a neighbor's house who has been very vocal about the lights being too bright and found that with the lights on and off there was no difference in the meter reading.

Mr. Keprios noted that he has copied all Park Board members on all emails he has received so that everyone can stay informed because the Park Board will be asked to give a recommendation prior to the report that's due in 2007. Mr. Keprios

stressed that they have pretty much done all that they can do with the lights at Todd Park.

Ms. Sitek stated that she requested this be on the agenda because she feels Mr. Keprios should not have to put up with this anymore, it's getting to be a bit much. She noted that possibly they could recommend something to the City Council that they let the park be as it is for the next two years. She added that she thinks it's ridiculous for Mr. Keprios to have to go to a park at 6:00 am and take light meter readings when it's obviously too dark. Ms. Sitek commented that she has driven by Todd Park at night and it is very dark. She indicated that if they are going to run a trial two years then it should be run like all of the other rinks. Mr. Keprios noted that he asked the police if they have received any calls regarding the Todd Park hockey rink and their most recent call was someone informed the police that they found two kids on the hockey rink unsupervised.

Ms. Presthus stated that Mr. Keprios has taken more than his share of what he's had to deal with on this and she commends him for keeping his patience and treating this as a very serious issue. He's done a great job and she would like to thank him on behalf of the Park Board for doing that and for all of the time that he has spent on this. She stated that she hopes that the people who do like the hockey rink at Todd Park will also call. She noted that she has seen a couple of emails and has verbally heard from people that they do like it, unfortunately, it's the people who are negative that have the loud voices who are doing the complaining. The people who are happy don't say anything because they are happy and she hopes that Mr. Keprios will hear more from them because they are also out there. Mr. Keprios responded that he appreciates all of the comments; however, it's not about him and staff but rather serving the community. He feels that staff has assembled a pretty fair and reasonable proposal to measure the pros and cons about having a hockey rink at Todd Park, plus some criteria to determine the pros and cons of placing an outdoor hockey rink at alternate locations. Mr. Keprios noted that he has been routinely meeting with a couple of representatives from the Todd Park neighborhood who represent the neighbors who don't want the hockey rink. Mr. Keprios stated that the Park Board will be called upon again when the time is right but currently this is the direction they are heading.

Mr. Klus commented that in one of the emails a group of people from Todd Park indicated that the Mayor was wishing that some things were going to happen there this season. Mr. Klus stated that he confronted the Mayor and asked him why he is talking to these people about doing something when they already have an agreement. He noted that the Mayor replied to him that he doesn't even know these people and has not talked to them. Mr. Klus stressed that they need to be very careful about what they hear and read and make sure it's accurate. Mr. Klus stated that he knows Mr. Keprios and his staff will do the best that they can with this no win situation with some of those folks.

III. NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY – COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Finsness informed the Park Board that prior to the Park Board meeting tonight a group of Park Board members met to start to talk about the needs assessment survey and how they should proceed. He noted that they need to think about how the comprehensive plan should fit into a needs assessment survey. He explained that they discussed whether they should be preparing a comprehensive plan first and then assessing the public or should they assess the public and then finish their comprehensive plan. Mr. Finsness stated that they unanimously decided that they should do a needs assessment survey first and then prepare their comprehensive plan required by the Met Council.

Mr. Finsness pointed out that they didn't talk about specifics regarding the needs assessment survey but did talk about how they should go about getting input. He noted that before they decide which consultant firm can help them with their survey they should first narrow it down to three firms to choose from. He commented that in the past they have used Decision Resources which they may want to use again or they may like to get a fresh approach from someone who has done this somewhere else. Therefore, they are going to look at three or four companies to do an RFP and get some input as to how they can pull this kind of data out of the public.

Mr. Klus asked if they discussed the timing of any of this to which Mr. Finsness replied no. Mr. Finsness stated that they did talk about whether or not they felt they were under the gun to get this done in the next two to three months and they decided they do not need to get it done that fast. They agreed they should take their time and do it right, however, there will be a time frame laid out so that it does not go on forever. Mr. Klus noted that he assumes they are going to continue on with the approved 2006 Capital Plan and not change anything because he thinks it's important for the community to know where they are going to spend the dollars this year. Mr. Klus commented that this way if the community feels there are some areas they are concerned about they could still come to the Park Board and talk about those areas.

Mr. Fronek pointed out that their next action is Mr. Keprios will come up with the RFP for the committee to look at and move forward as open as possible. Mr. Keprios stated that they touched on some really great ideas. He noted that the strong interests of the group were of course programmed facilities but they also discussed water quality, natural resources, including our urban forests and be sure that it's in sync with updating their comprehensive plan. He stressed that they need to be ready to present this to the Metropolitan Council by the September 2008 deadline. Mr. Keprios stated that they thought they would measure the need first and then dial that into the comprehensive plan in which the Park Board will be very involved.

Mr. O'Connell stressed that they have a lot of work to do and because of the changes that are occurring they need to recognize those changes and that's why they need a good consultant. He added that with a new consultant they would have a fresh approach.

Jeanne Hanson, 6708 Cornelia Drive, asked if a survey will be done by mail to every resident of Edina or hasn't that yet been decided. Ms. Presthus responded that part of the RFP is to ask the research firms how they would go about doing this survey and it could be a combination of things. There may be small focus groups, phone surveys, door to door surveys, internet surveys, etc. She noted that it is up to the research company to tell them their best practices and how to get the most statistically significant data. Ms. Presthus pointed out that in a survey like this typically not every household goes through a full survey. She commented that they are going to rely first on getting the RFP from the people who are the professionals in this field.

Ms. Hanson asked when the residents would be able to give their input on what questions they would like to see on the survey. Ms. Presthus replied that there are about four steps they need to complete first before the survey is actually written. She noted that first they need to find which process they are going to use to go about doing this. Mr. Finsness commented that the most important question is if a specific question isn't on the survey, then that interest isn't addressed. Ms. Presthus pointed out that the survey wouldn't go before the community without first receiving some kind of community input.

Jean White, 5290 Villa Way, asked if the Metropolitan Council would evaluate the land use within the park and any possible changes to the recreational aspect versus the natural aspect of the park. For example, would they have to submit a change if they are going to move some dirt. Mr. Keprios gave Ms. White a copy of the Comprehensive Plan as it exists today and noted that it would essentially be an update of the current plan. He indicated that he believes it shows all of the park land in Edina and how it is categorized. Ms. White asked if the public has a specific area that they wanted to see, for example, invasive species. She asked how the public would be able to give their input on that to which Mr. Keprios replied that he's sure that there will be adequate opportunities for public input.

Mr. Keprios explained that during our initial park development years the focus has been on land and facility development to serve program needs. We really don't have a detailed management plan for preserving natural resources, or a long-range water quality and urban forestry management plan. He commented that is something that they have discussed in their assessment meeting and is something they will look at. Ms. White stated that she would encourage they go in that direction and appreciates the Park Board's consideration.

IV. OFF-LEASH DOG PARK – VAN VALKENBURG PARK

Mr. Keprios reminded the Park Board that they have already formally given their okay for an Off-Leash Dog Park at VanValkenburg and so has the City Council. He informed the Park Board that they did not get the donation money they were hoping for, however, they were able to get funding for it through their 2006 operating budget. Mr. Keprios stated that there has been enough lapse of time since the Park Board first gave their okay on this and therefore wants to make sure that no one now has a different view.

Mr. Klus read the Park Board's previously approved motion.

Todd Fronek MOVED TO APPROACH THE EDINA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION ON GIVEN THAT WE CAN GET FUNDING WE WILL AGREE THAT WE WILL BUILD THE INTERIM OFF-LEASH DOG PARK AT VAN VALKENBURG PARK ON THE CONDITION THAT WE WILL MATCH IT. IF THEY CAN COME UP WITH \$5,000 OR WHATEVER HALF IS THAT WE WOULD AGREE TO BUILD THE OFF-LEASH DOG PARK. Karla Sitek SECONDED THE MOTION.

Todd Fronek AMENDED HIS MOTION TO INCLUDE BOTH RESIDENTS AND NON-RESIDENTS, RESIDENTS PAYING A \$25.00 FEE AND NON-RESIDENTS A \$50.00 FEE. Karla Sitek SECONDED THE AMENDMENT. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Klus noted that tonight what they need to do is get a motion on the table to approve this since it is now coming from public money and not from private funding.

Linda Presthus MOVED TO APPROVE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE OFF-LEASH DOG PARK AT VAN VALKENBURG PARK WITH THE OPERATING FUNDS APPROVED BY COUNCIL. Todd Fronek SECONDED THE MOTION.

Mr. O'Connell commented that he gave Mr. Keprios a copy of the Minneapolis Star and Tribune which emphasizes the need for dog parks, how they should be handled and the success the surrounding communities have had with them. He stated that the need is there and we will have to monitor the success of this project.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Keprios opened up nominations for Chair of the Park Board. Linda Presthus NOMINATED ANDY FINSNESS. Mr. Finsness accepted the nomination. Todd Fronek NOMINATED GEORGE KLUS. Mr. Klus accepted the nomination.

Ray O'Connell MOVED TO CLOSE NOMINATIONS. Mike Damman SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED

Mr. Keprios took a ballot vote and stated that Andy Finsness is now Chair of the Park Board.

Mr. Keprios opened up nominations for Vice-Chair of Park Board. Linda Presthus NOMINATED Mike Weiss. Mr. Weiss accepted the nomination.

Ray O'Connell MOVED TO CLOSE NOMINATIONS. Todd Fronek SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED. Mr. Keprios stated that Mike Weiss is now the Vice Chair of the Park Board.

Mr. Keprios thanked Mr. Klus for all of his years as Chair.

Ms. Presthus stated that she would like to officially thank George Klus for the great leadership that he has provided the Park Board, he has done a wonderful job and put forth a wonderful effort to the community and they appreciate everything he has done for the Park Board.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

George Klus MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:50 P.M. Karla Sitek SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.